

## **2023 FALL ACBL BOARD MEETING REPORT**

The ACBL Board of Directors held its fall meeting face-to-face Monday, November 20 through Wednesday, November 22 in Atlanta. The Board, its Task Forces and its Committees continue to meet regularly through Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

### **FINANCE**

Management's proposed 2024 operating and capital budgets were approved. Budgeted revenues total \$16.4M; budgeted operating and administrative expenses total \$16.7M, yielding a budgeted loss of approximately \$300K. Revenue derived from online special games offer an opportunity to substantially reduce the loss. The capital budget totals \$543K, the majority of which will be invested in modernization and migration of applications that reside on the AS400 platform.

The United States Bridge Federation (USBF) has been receiving \$50K annually from the Junior Fund to fund junior and youth teams' travel to international competitions. Item 233-FN01 included a motion to increase this amount to \$65K to account for escalation of travel costs.

Carried: 14-0-3. Three representatives were absent at the time the vote was taken.  
Effective: Immediate.

Item 233-FN02 included a motion that the annual distribution of Grass Roots funds be capped at \$25,000 per year per District. The Grass Roots Fund was established in 2011 to offset District costs associated with conducting NAP and GNT events, primarily to subsidize travel expenses for players advancing to the events' NABC Finals. A few larger Districts raise considerably more than \$25,000 while the vast majority of Districts raise far less. This motion failed (2-13-1 with one Board member absent) as the Board and management will work toward a more equitable approach and formulate plans to increase attendance at NAP/GNT events.

### **MEMBERSHIP BUILDING TASK FORCE**

Item 233-MTF01 included a motion to amend the Codification, Chapter III - Administration of Operations as it relates to the current 11% rebate of dues and life master service fees to Units. Per the motion, Units would automatically receive a base 5% rebate. ACBL management would develop and deploy a program to enable Units to earn up to an additional 10% (15% in total) rebate based on progress on reducing lapsing Unit member memberships and increasing Unit membership during each calendar year.

Carried: 15-2-0.  
Effective: March 31, 2024.

As a result of this motion, ACBL management has developed the 5/5/5, a Unit-level membership building and retention program that will launch April 1, 2024. Communication and coordination of the program with Units is underway. ACBL is providing metrics, a dashboard, and tools, training and resources for success.

## **APPEALS AND CHARGES**

The Appeals and Charges Committee reported on hearings it held since its last report to the Board in October 2023 – seven reviews of Negotiated Resolutions and four Automatic Reviews of lower level disciplinary body hearings. Hearing reports are available at the Ethics & Disciplinary area of the ACBL website: <https://www.acbl.org/ethics/>

## **GOVERNANCE**

As part of its continuing effort to streamline Board processes and procedures, Governance developed four motions that addressed the responsibilities of the Audit Committee (233-GV01), deleted unneeded content from the Codification regarding Audit procedures (233-GV02), summarized terms of Executive Director employment (233-GV03), and adjusted certain employment regulations (233-GV-05). The first three of these items were on the Consent Calendar, having passed unanimously in Committee and with no non-Committee members objecting. GV-05 passed unanimously during the meeting 16-0-0 with one member absent. All were effective immediately on the date of their passage – November 20, 2023.

An Action Item was approved to ensure the regulations regarding employees and consultants were added to the *ACBL Employee Handbook*.

Item 233-GV04 included proposed changes to a motion passed in spring 2023 that reduced the number of Goodwill receptions from three annually to one which would alternate every three years among the three geographic areas in which NABCs are held: East, Central and West. The original wording of this motion for Atlanta was to hold the reception every year in the spring, but further discussion during the Board meeting resulted in the once-a-year reception honoring the Goodwill Member of the Year, the Volunteer of the Year and the Honorary Member of the Year being held during each summer NABC. Summers are traditionally the most well-attended NABCs, providing an attractive opportunity for Goodwill members throughout ACBL to participate in extending appreciation to these special volunteers.

Carried: 11-5-1.

Effective: January 1, 2024.

An Action Item was approved requesting management and committee chairs develop procedures to record/transcribe their meetings electronically and archive them for access. As Advisory Council members and other volunteers increasingly become members of Committees and Task Forces and there is broader interaction of these

bodies, accurate records of meetings will be increasingly important for communication and coordination.

## **BRIDGE**

Item 233-BR01 included a motion that Codification, Chapter IX - Regionals, Regional Tournament Sanctioning and Scheduling be amended, stating that the ACBL Tournament Department will use distance as the criteria for determining whether there is a proximity conflict (geographic overlap) with a previously scheduled sectional or regional (or traditional date regional). It also addressed provisions for resolution where such conflicts exist within a District, between different Districts within the same Region, and between different Regions.

Carried: 16-1-0.

Effective date: November 21, 2023.

## **ONLINE BRIDGE**

The Board reviewed initiatives undertaken from 2020 to the present in the context of online bridge. This highlighted players' online play preferences, club venues, and table count data. To support development of a more focused strategic plan for online bridge, the Board and management engaged in breakout groups to discuss a series of topics and exchange views. Topics included FTF club programs, VABCs, BBO and online providers in general that promote play, membership recruitment, retention and education; promoting ways to embrace social bridge players; targeted marketing programs to players of various games; and effects of increasing/decreasing masterpoint awards and access to pigmented points online and in FTF games. This was one of such management/Board discussions to be held in the coming months as part of defining ACBL's strategic direction.

## **NABC SITE SELECTION**

The Dallas, Texas Hyatt Regency was approved as the location for the 2027 Spring NABC by unanimous vote.

## **CERTIFICATION OF ELECTIONS**

Joann Glasson, District 4, was certified as having been duly elected to the Board to represent Region 3 for a three-year term, January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2026.

Margot Hennings, Region 4, was elected ACBL President for a one-year term, January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

Cindy Shoemaker, Region 10, was elected ACBL Vice President for a one-year term January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

David Lodge, Region 11, was elected ACBL Treasurer by acclamation for a one-year term January 1, 2024.

Paul Cuneo, Region 9, was elected ACBL 401K Trustee by acclamation for a one-year term January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 to complete the term of Carlos Munoz, former ACBL Board member.

Joann Glasson, Region 3, was elected ACBL 401K Trustee by acclamation to complete the term of the vacant position immediately through December 31, 2026.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

Mitch Dunitz, Region 11, was appointed 2024 Nadine Wood Volunteer Member of the Year by ACBL President Joann Glasson.

Carried: Unanimous.

Danny Sprung, Region 10, was appointed the 2024 ACBL Honorary Member of the Year by ACBL management.

Carried: Unanimous.

Judyann Schnorf, District 7, was recommended by the Goodwill Committee and approved by the Board as the 2024 Goodwill Member of the Year.

Carried: Unanimous.